

IREX/ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS (ARO) PROGRAM



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Expert Committee Meetings in Tomsk

On August 1-3, the ARO Expert Committee met in Tomsk to review grant applications for the conduction of social projects as part of the “Children of the Tomsk Oblast” Program. Organized in cooperation with the Tomsk Department of Family and Children’s Issues, the tender called for projects in three key areas of interest: support services for families with children with disabilities, social and psychological support for foster families, and Early Intervention services for children with developmental delays and their families. Ultimately, 17 projects were selected and will each receive 100,000 rubles (approx. \$4,000) per project from the Tomsk Department of Family and Children’s Services’ budget.

The ARO Expert Committee also reviewed applications for social projects in Tomsk using a consolidated budget. The tender called for social projects for the development of standards of practice for child abandonment prevention services. Of the 24 projects selected for funding, ARO will provide 1,112,000 rubles (approx. \$43,600) to support 13 projects, and 1,276,000 rubles (approx. \$50,000) will be provided by the Department of Family and Children’s Issues to finance 11 projects. In addition, the company Vostokgazprom provided 700,000 rubles (approx. \$27,400) in financing for the projects.

Educational Seminar in Novosibirsk

ARO Expert Consultant Ekaterina Selenina conducted a seminar on August 16-17 entitled “Social and Psychological Adaptation of Orphanage Graduates” for 20 specialists, including social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists, and child welfare administrators in the Leninskiy neighborhood of Novosibirsk. ►

Summary:

In early August, the ARO Expert Committee met in Tomsk to review applications to conduct social projects in the region. A total of 41 projects were selected to provide services to children and families in crisis and develop standards of practice for social services.

The ARO Program conducted multiple educational activities in August, including trainings and seminars in Novosibirsk and Tomsk. ARO also organized a study tour to Tomsk for specialists from Novosibirsk interested in implementing recreational activities for at-risk children.

ARO consultants met with the Head of the Children’s Rights Department of the Tambov Oblast Department of Education Marina Bykova in August to discuss Tambov’s legislation on guardianship and trusteeship to encourage the promotion of family forms of care for abandoned and orphaned children.

Representatives of the ARO Program took part in two large-scale conferences devoted to a review of the education system in Khabarovsk, and the ARO-developed after-school activity programs in Khabarovsk, in particular. The mayor of Khabarovsk reaffirmed his support of child abandonment prevention work in schools, as well as family forms of care.



Tomsk Child Welfare Workshop

IREX Educational Consultant Dr. Eileen Lally and Head of the ARO Expert Consulting Group Antonina Shepina traveled to Tomsk to conduct the third in a series of workshops devoted to child welfare issues for the *New Development Charity Foundation* on August 28-31. Sixteen specialists participated in the workshop, which focused on Training-of-Trainers and supervision of specialists. The Tomsk-based specialists are working to provide introductory training to new specialists in other regions on basic caseworker skills in family-centered work, case management, and early intervention. As always, the participants were extremely receptive to the information presented and learned a lot from each other over the course of the workshop.



Participants at the August 28-31 Child Welfare Workshop in Tomsk

Upcoming Activities:

September 5 (Khabarovsk):

Project seminar for social welfare and guardianship department managers on implementing innovative child abandonment prevention services.

September 9-11 (Khabarovsk):

Seminar for specialists from clubs held at municipal libraries for children from families at risk of child abandonment.

September 10 (Tomsk):

Seminar on team therapy in child abandonment prevention, conducted by A. Shadura.

September 11 (Irkutsk):

Meeting of the Irkutsk workgroup to discuss the city model of medical/psychological/social assistance to families affected by HIV.

September 12 (Magnitogorsk):

Mini-training for employees from the ROSA Center on improving the organization of support services for women with HIV.

September 13 (Tambov):

Seminar for child welfare experts on effective means of working with families in crisis.

September 15-17 (Khabarovsk):

Seminar for specialists from after-school activity programs in Khabarovsk for at-risk youth.

September 18 (Angarsk):

Seminar for kindergarten workers on HIV/AIDS.

September 18-19 (Irkutsk):

Seminar for medical workers on HIV/AIDS and the participation of municipal healthcare institutions in the provision of medical/psychological/social support services to people affected by HIV/AIDS.

September 20 (Angarsk):

Seminar for kindergarten workers on HIV/AIDS.

September 23 (Tambov):

Seminar for child welfare experts on family forms of care for abandoned and orphaned children.

September 21-26 (Tomsk):

Educational seminar on the standardization of services for winners of the grant tender for the development of standards of practice in the child welfare system.

September 27 (Krasnoyarsk):

Training seminar on Early Intervention for specialists from baby homes.

September 28 (Irkutsk):

Information seminar for HIV-positive women and their families conducted by the Irkutsk AIDS Center.

September 28 (Angarsk):

Meeting of the workgroup to discuss the model of interaction between the healthcare and social welfare departments.

September 29-30 (Khabarovsk):

Seminar for Early Intervention specialists on the use of physical therapy.

